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# Safety

One of the goals of MTC's long-range *Transportation 2030 Plan* is to improve safety for all users of the transportation system — drivers and passengers, transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians.

This report uses statistics on injury and fatal collisions to gauge roadway safety. The most widely used safety information on motor vehicle (automobile, truck or motorcycle) collisions with other motor vehicles, as well as collisions with bicyclists and pedestrians comes from data assembled by the California Highway Patrol.

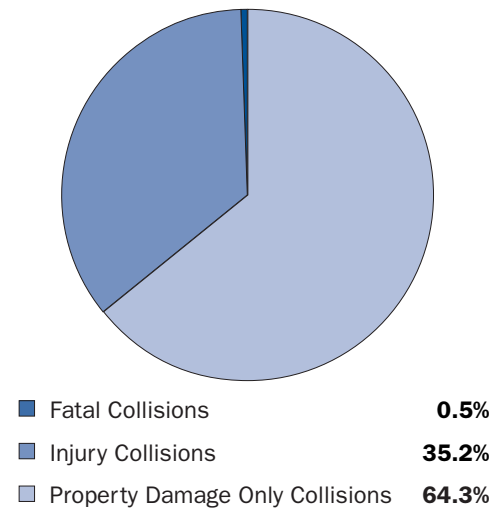
With respect to transit, the Federal Transit Administration has shifted to a reporting system that requires transit operators to submit more frequent and more comprehensive reports on transit safety. While the new requirements promise ultimately to improve the quality of information, authoritative data is not yet available. We hope to include transit safety data in future *State of the System* reports.

Motor Vehicle Collisions

Number of Injury and Fatal Collisions Drops for Fifth Straight Year

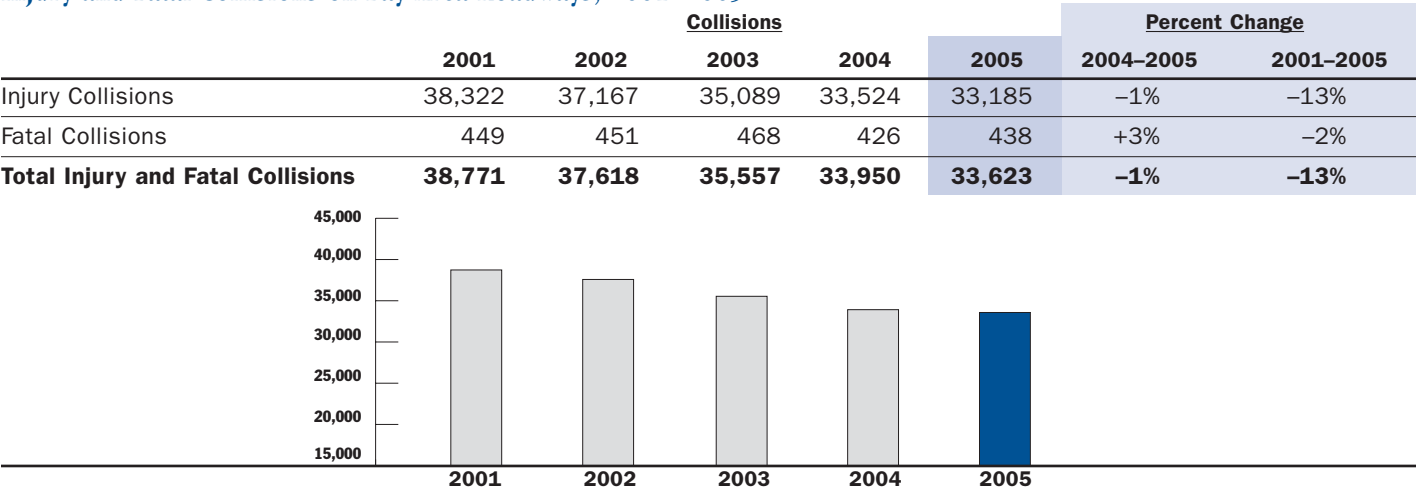
- The total number of reported injury and fatal motor vehicle collisions in the Bay Area fell 1 percent in 2005, continuing a trend that stretches back to 2001. Over the past five years, the total number of injury and fatal collisions has decreased 13 percent regionwide.
- Despite the slight drop in the combined number of injury and fatal motor vehicle collisions, the number of fatal collisions increased 3 percent in 2005.
- Fortunately, most motor vehicle collisions do not result in injuries or fatalities. In 2005, 64 percent of collisions involved property damage only, which is in line with prior years. Approximately 35 percent of collisions resulted in injuries, and about one-half of one percent caused fatalities.

Motor Vehicle Collisions in the Bay Area  
In 2005: Fatal, Injury, Property Damage



Source: California Highway Patrol  
95,202 collisions = 100%

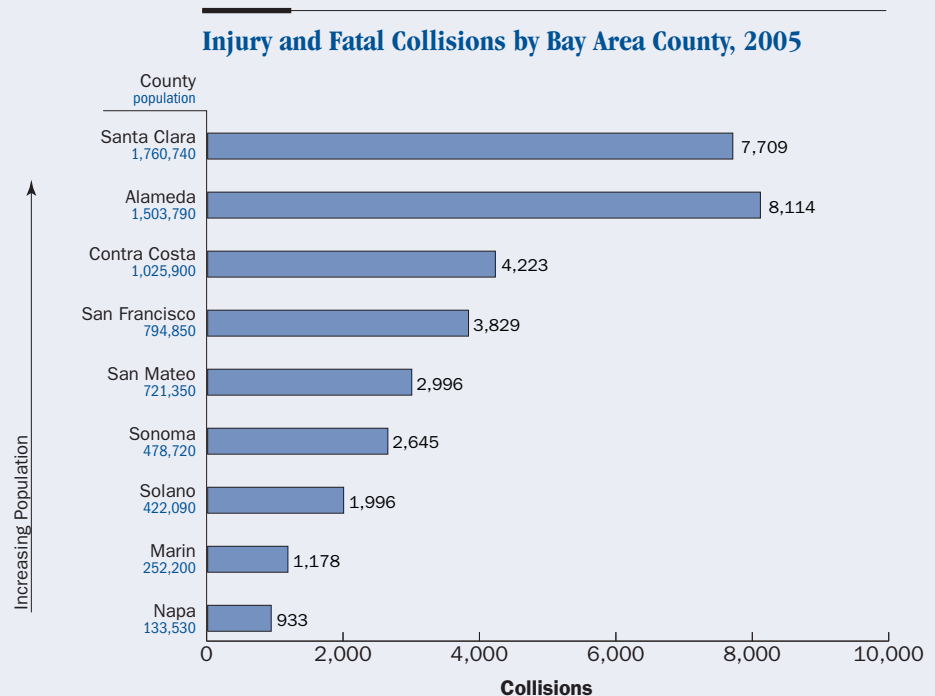
Injury and Fatal Collisions on Bay Area Roadways, 2001–2005



Source: California Highway Patrol

- The 95,202 reported collisions (including those resulting in injury, fatality or property damage) in 2005 represented a 1 percent drop from 2004, when 96,069 collisions were reported.
- Several key factors influence the number of collisions. These include: driver education and behavior, vehicle safety features, roadway conditions, traffic congestion and total number of miles driven. Studies suggest that while freeway driving accounts for approximately 60 percent of all miles driven in the Bay Area, only about 25 percent of all collisions occur on freeways.

**A Closer Look** – We can get a rough idea of the geographic distribution of injury and fatal collisions by breaking them out by county of occurrence. In general, a given county's share of collisions correlates closely with its size, as measured by population (see bar graph). The greatest number of collisions occurs in Alameda County, though it ranks second to Santa Clara County in terms of population. This is probably explained by the fact that Alameda is a “crossroads” county, within whose borders a significant number of vehicle miles of travel are logged each year — both by its own residents and those from other counties.



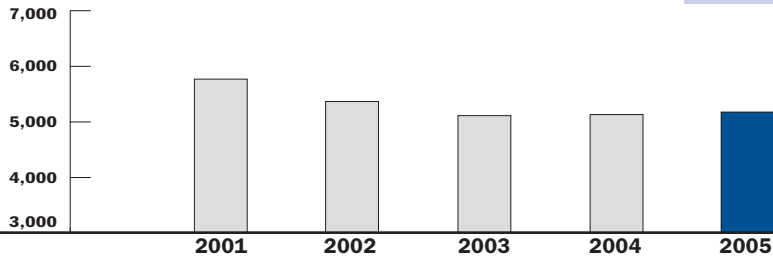
Sources: California Highway Patrol, California Department of Finance

# Number of Collisions Involving Bicyclists or Pedestrians Increases Slightly

- In 2005, the number of injury and fatal motor vehicle collisions involving bicyclists or pedestrians varied little from the totals reached in each of the two years preceding. The 5,175 pedestrian and bicycle collisions reported throughout the Bay Area in 2005 represent an increase of just 50 collisions compared to 2004. Each year since 2002, there have been fewer than 5,500 injury or fatal motor vehicle collisions involving bicyclists or pedestrians.
- Fatal collisions were five times more likely to involve pedestrians than cyclists. This is similar to years past, and reflects the fact that walking is a more common form of transportation than bicycling. In 2005, there were 105 fatal collisions involving pedestrians and 17 fatal collisions involving bicyclists.
- The 5,175 injury and fatal collisions involving pedestrians or cyclists represent 15 percent of the 33,623 injury and fatal motor vehicle collisions that occurred in 2005 (see previous section). But the 122 fatal collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists represent a disproportionate 28 percent of all fatal motor vehicle collisions.
- These data include only motor vehicle collisions reported to law-enforcement authorities. There may be a significant number of injury collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists that are not reported.

Injury and Fatal Motor Vehicle Collisions Involving Pedestrians or Bicyclists, 2001–2005

	Collisions					Percent Change	
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2004–2005	2001–2005
<b>Collisions Involving Pedestrians</b>							
Injury Collisions	3,080	2,910	2,740	2,648	2,677	+1%	–13%
Fatal Collisions	103	111	104	100	105	+5%	+2%
Subtotal	3,183	3,021	2,844	2,748	2,782	+1%	–13%
<b>Collisions Involving Bicyclists</b>							
Injury Collisions	2,566	2,321	2,254	2,357	2,376	+1%	–7%
Fatal Collisions	20	19	14	20	17	–15%	–15%
Subtotal	2,586	2,340	2,268	2,377	2,393	+1%	–7%
<b>Total Involving Bicyclists or Pedestrians</b>	<b>5,769</b>	<b>5,361</b>	<b>5,112</b>	<b>5,125</b>	<b>5,175</b>	<b>+1%</b>	<b>–10%</b>



Source: California Highway Patrol

**A Closer Look –** In the absence of better data about how much people are walking and bicycling in the Bay Area, we can look for patterns based on population by jurisdiction. As with data on all collisions, there appears to be a strong correlation between population rank and rank in pedestrian- and bicycle-involved motor vehicle collisions. (For this reason, there is a great deal of consistency from year to year in the jurisdictions with the highest number of pedestrian- and bicycle-involved collisions, with the largest cities – San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose consistently reporting the highest number of collisions.) There are some notable exceptions that may be explained by factors such as travel patterns, demographics and daytime population (workers or students).

- Berkeley, which is the 15th-largest Bay Area city in terms of population, ranks fourth in both pedestrian and bicycle-involved collisions. This likely reflects the high level of walking and cycling in this university-centered community. Berkeley also has a higher daytime population due to the university, which attracts large numbers of students and workers.
- The city of Vallejo ranks 12th in terms of population but fifth for collisions involving pedestrians. Compared to other Bay Area communities, Vallejo has a greater percentage of youth under 18 and a greater share of people living in poverty. Both factors tend to correlate with a higher level of pedestrian activity.

**Injury and Fatal Motor Vehicle Collisions Involving Pedestrians And Bicyclists by Bay Area Jurisdiction, 2005**

**PEDESTRIANS**

2005 Rank	Jurisdiction	Total 2005	Annual Average 2000–2004	Rank in Population
1	San Francisco	759	862	2
2	San Jose	323	336	1
3	Oakland	303	311	3
4	Berkeley	98	119	15
5	Vallejo	52	55	12
6	Fremont	51	54	4
7	Hayward	47	69	8
8	Santa Rosa	46	53	14
	Fairfield	46	41	6
10	Richmond	45	53	17

**BICYCLISTS**

2005 Rank	Jurisdiction	Total 2005	Annual Average 2000–2004	Rank in Population
1	San Francisco	351	335	2
2	San Jose	289	295	1
3	Oakland	139	127	3
4	Berkeley	115	134	15
5	Palo Alto	86	66	35
6	Concord	63	42	11
7	Santa Rosa	57	68	6
8	Napa	48	38	24
9	Hayward	44	45	8
10	Sunnyvale	43	45	10

Sources: California Highway Patrol, California Department of Finance

- Palo Alto ranks much higher in terms of bicycle-involved collisions (fifth) than in population (35th). Palo Alto has a large daytime population due to Stanford University and its residents are more likely than those of other Bay Area cities to commute to work by bicycle, according to data collected by the 2000 U.S. Census.